

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BERLIN 01306 01 OF 02 221522Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
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INFO USIA WASHDC
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AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
USMISSION USBERLIN
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BERLIN 01306

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, GE
SUBJECT: HONECKER'S SPEECH TO SED FIRST SECRETARIES:
HARSHER LINE IN FOREIGN POLICY

REF: 77 BERLIN 7570

1. SUMMARY: IN A LENGTHY ADDRESS TO SED FIRST
SECRETARIES OF THE KREIS LEVEL FEBRUARY 17, "EXCERPTS" OF
WHICH WERE CARRIED IN NEUES DEUTSCHLAND FEB. 18-19,
HONECKER DISCUSSED "THE TASKS FOR THE FURTHER
REALIZATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE 9TH SED CONGRESS."
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PAGE 02 BERLIN 01306 01 OF 02 221522Z

HONECKER'S REMARKS APPEAR TO BE A REAFFIRMATION
AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE POLICIES HE HAS BEEN
PURSUING, AND POSSIBLY AN INDIRECT RESPONSE TO
CRITICS OF HIS POLICIES IN THE WAKE OF THE SPIEGEL
"MANIFESTO" UPROAR. ON FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES,
HONECKER DELIVERED A LENGTHY DOGMATIC RECITATION ON
THE EVILS OF CAPITALISM AND IMPERIALISM AND THE

GLORIES OF SOCIALISM AS PRACTICED UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE SOVIET UNION. HE CLOSELY IDENTIFIED THE GDR WITH ITS SOCIALIST BROTHER STATES, CONDEMNED IN STRONG TERMS WESTERN DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEUTRON BOMB AND OTHER NATO ARMAMENTS PROGRAMS, CRITICIZED WEST GERMAN MASS MEDIA BUT DREW A MODERATE PICTURE IN DESCRIBING FRG-GDR RELATIONS. HE ATTACKED WESTERN POLICIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA AND WAS MORE CRITICAL OF THE USA IN PARTICULAR THAN HE HAS BEEN IN THE RECENT PAST. REPORTING ON THE ECONOMIC AND INTERNAL POLITICAL SECTIONS OF THE SPEECH FOLLOW IN SEPTELS. END SUMMARY.

2. HONECKER LEAD OFF HIS ADDRESS WITH A LENGTHY RECITATION OF THE STANDARD MARXIST-LENINIST VIEW OF THE NATURE OF THE CONFLICT BETWEEN SOCIALISM AND CAPITALISM. HE CRITICIZED CAPITALISM FOR ITS "ANTI-HUMAN FAILINGS AND THE PARASITICAL CHARACTER OF THE PROFIT SYSTEM" AND DWELT AT LENGTH ON THE "DEEPENING CYCLICAL CRISIS OF CAPITALISM" WITH ITS ATTENDANT "PESSIMISM, STAGNATION AND DEPRESSION". HE REVIEWED AT GREAT LENGTH THE DIFFICULTIES OF NUMEROUS INDUSTRIES IN WESTERN COUNTRIES AS EXAMPLES OF THE "IMPOTENCE" OF THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM WHICH HE SAW AS BEING SIMULTANEOUSLY IN THE GRIP OF A CRISIS OF OVER-PRODUCTION,
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PAGE 03 BERLIN 01306 01 OF 02 221522Z

UNEMPLOYMENT AND INFLATION. THE LESSON HE DREW FROM THIS LITANY OF WESTERN FAILURE WAS THAT "THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY BELONGS TO SOCIALISM."

3. HONECKER DEVOTED ATTENTION TO THE PROBLEM OF DISARMAMENT, NOTING THAT THE END OF THE ARMS RACE IS ONE OF THE KEY QUESTIONS FOR THE CONTINUATION OF DETENTE, AND PATTED THE USSR ON THE BACK FOR ITS PERSISTENT NEGOTIATIONS IN SALT. HE SINGLED OUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEUTRON BOMB, ADDING THAT IF THE US AND ITS NATO ALLIES PROCEED TO PRODUCE IT, THE USSR WOULD BE PREPARED TO FOLLOW SUIT, AS IN THE CASE OF THE ATOM BOMB. HE CHARACTERIZED WESTERN ACTIVITIES AS INCONSISTENT WITH THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT AND ACCUSED THE "USAND FRG AND SOME OTHER STATES" OF ADOPTING A "DESTRUCTIVE POLICY OF CONFRONTATION AND SLANDER IN THE STYLE OF THE COLD WAR" AT BELGRADE.

4. ON FRG-GDR RELATIONS HONECKER STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PRINCIPLES OF PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE AND NON-INTERFERENCE AND ACCUSED THE FRG OF A 30-YEAR EFFORT TO "BUILD A WALL (SIC) AGAINST THE

MARCH OF SOCIALISM." IN A HIGHLY CRITICAL REVIEW
OF WEST GERMAN SOCIETY AND POLICIES
HONECKER ASSERTED THE GDR APPRECIATES THE
ATTITUDE OF REALISTIC CIRCLES IN THE FRG, BUT
CANNOT DISREGARD THE ANTI-COMMUNIST ATTITUDE OF
THE MAJORITY OF FRG CITIZENS. (NOTE: TO OUR
KNOWLEDGE THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT HONECKER HAS
PUBLICLY MADE SUCH AN ASSERTION.) HE SINGLED OUT
FOR SPECIAL CRITICISM THE "INFLUENCE OF THE SECRET
SERVICE AND OF FORMER NAZI OFFICIALS" AND THE

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PAGE 01 BERLIN 01306 02 OF 02 221531Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BERLIN 01306

"MANIPULATION OF PUBLIC OPINION THROUGH
THE MASS MEDIA IN WHICH AXEL SPRINGER PLAYS ALWAYS
A LARGE ROLE." HOWEVER, HE SAID THAT "NO ONE
HAS GROUNDS" TO ACCUSE THE GDR OF AN UNWILLINGNESS
TO DEVELOP CONSTRUCTIVELY RELATIONS IN THE SPIRIT
OF THE "PRINCIPLES OF TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF
STATES AND NON-INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS".
HE EXPRESSED THE WILLINGNESS OF THE GDR TO ADVANCE

FURTHER IN "RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO GERMAN STATES"
AND STATED THAT, WHILE IT COULD BE SAID THAT THE
RECENT WISCHNEWSKI-AXEN MEETING HAD NOT SOLVED ANY
OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS, IT HAD BEEN "CONDUCTED IN AN
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PAGE 02 BERLIN 01306 02 OF 02 221531Z

OPEN AND FRANK ATMOSPHERE AND
WAS A USEFUL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS".

5. IN CONDEMNING THE IMPERIALIST ACTIVITIES OF
WESTERN STATES HONECKER CONCENTRATED ON THE MIDDLE
EAST AND ETHIOPIA. HE CHARACTERIZED
WESTERN ACTIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AS BASED ON PROFIT
MOTIVE AND NEO-COLONIALIST INFLUENCE AND CALLED FOR
THE UNITY OF ARAB COUNTRIES AND CONVENING OF A
GENEVA CONFERENCE. HE STRONGLY
CRITICIZED US AND FRG POLICIES IN ETHIOPIA FROM
THE TIME OF HAILE SELASSIE TO THE PRESENT. HOWEVER,
HE SAID THAT THERE WERE NOT ONLY IMPERIALISTIC
CONSPIRACIES IN ETHIOPIA BUT ALSO "THE SOLIDARITY
OF THE SOVIET UNION, THE GDR, CUBA AND OTHER BROTHER
STATES WITH THE PEOPLE OF ETHIOPIA, ANGOLA,
MOZAMBIQUE AND SOUTH AFRICA." HE SUMMARIZED
GDR ATTITUDES TOWARD AFRICA BY SAYING THAT "THE
TENDENCY IS NOT THAT OF COUNTER REVOLUTION BUT
THAT OF REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENTS".

6. THE SPEECH CONTAINED AN UNUSUAL NUMBER OF
CRITICAL REFERENCES TO THE UNITED STATES. HONECKER
CITED THE US AND THE FRG AS "THE AGGRESSIVE
CORE" OF NATO, CRITICIZED US "INTERFERENCE" IN
FRENCH AND ITALIAN POLITICS, DWELT AT SOME LENGTH
ON THE NEUTRON BOMB ISSUE AND CONDEMNED THE
US (IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE FRG) FOR ITS CSCE AND
AFRICAN POLICIES. WHILE NOT
CONSTITUTING A COHESIVE ATTACK ON THE
UNITED STATES, THE SPEECH IS NOTABLE FOR THE SIMPLE
NUMBER OF UNFAVORABLE REFERENCES TO THE US WHICH
IT CONTAINS, AND WHICH SEEM TO US TO BE UNUSUAL
FOR HONECKER.

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PAGE 03 BERLIN 01306 02 OF 02 221531Z

7. COMMENT. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT
THE NEUES DEUTSCHLAND ACCOUNT OF HONECKER'S SPEECH,
WHICH RAN TO SIX FULL PAGES, WAS NOT THE FULL TEXT.
NUMEROUS EXAMPLES, APPARENTLY OF POOR WORK ON THE

ECONOMIC SIDE, WERE NOT PRINTED. AS A RESULT
ACCORDING TO ONE GDR CONTACT, THE OVERALL TONE OF
THE SPEECH IS TOO OPTIMISTIC IN TERMS OF THE PROBLEMS
CONFRONTING THE REGIME. IN GENERAL, THE SPEECH
STRIKES US AS AN ATTEMPT BY HONECKER TO JUSTIFY
THE CORRECTNESS OF THE REGIME'S CURRENT POLICY
LINE AND TO INDICATE THERE WILL BE NO CHANGE. ON
THE FOREIGN POLICY SIDE, HOWEVER, IT SEEMS SOMEWHAT
HARSHER WITH RESPECT TO THE FRG AND THE USA,
ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT THE
REGIME IS NOT PREPARED TO CONTINUE TO DEAL
WITH BONN ON SPECIFIC ITEMS OF INTEREST. END COMMENT.
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